

## Commission on the Status of Men

Minutes – September 25 2009, 1 – 3:30 PM  
Legislative Office Building Room 206 - Concord, NH

1. Call to Order/Introduction of the Commissioners and Guests – **Chairman Joe Mastromarino called the meeting to order at 1:06. Commissioner David Lauren sent regrets. Members Larry Colby, Michael Geanoulis, Scott Meyer and Cam Sinclair were in attendance. One seat on the Commission remains empty awaiting approval by the Governor and Governor's Executive Council**
  
2. Adopt Agenda – **The agenda was accepted as printed**  
**Motion: Larry Colby    2<sup>nd</sup>: Cam Sinclair    Passed unanimously**
  
3. Secretary's Report/Approval of August Minutes – **Larry distributed the minutes and asked members to note item 5, Paternity Fraud/Model Paternity Bill and item 11, RSA 167:2-b - public assistance to blind, aged, or disabled persons, and to dependent children. Both of these items resulted in unanimously approved actions by the Commission**  
**Motion: Larry                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Michael Geanoulis                      Passed unanimously**
  
4. Treasurer's Report – **Joe Mastromarino shared the current balance of \$2,742.18**
  - a. NE Fathering Conference Sponsorship: Bill Payment – **Larry reported that he had received the name and contact information for the person at the NE Fathering Conference. \$500 dollars was previously agreed to and will be drawn from the NHCSM account when Commissioner Lauren is available. Larry said further that he would contact David and Barry Bodell, NH Administrative Services to see if the disbursement can be made before the next meeting. A motion was offered to accept the Treasurer's Report**  
**Motion: Larry                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Cam                      Passed unanimously**
  
5. Model Paternity Bill – **Larry respectfully asked how the two straight-forward motions and actions about paternity fraud and 167.2-b (sex-neutral language) approved at the August meeting had become small, unclear parts of Michael's lengthy correspondence with legislators. Mike stated that all seven items he forwarded had been discussed at NHCSM meetings and that he had shared the memo with members via email before sharing with the entire NH House. He also said that he was under a time crunch to reach legislators before the deadline for filing proposed bills. Larry responded that the time crunch alone should have been reason enough to forward only the two motions in the exact, unambiguous language approved by the Commission. After full discussion Commission members agreed to police themselves when communicating/forwarding approved Commission actions to legislators and to use the exact language voted upon. Mike made a strong point that legislative action was crucial if the duty of the Commission - issues that are particular to men and boys in our society including but not limited to those involving health and mental health care, educational attainment status and the father/child connection – was to be accomplished. He offered a motion to add, legislative initiatives to every NHCSM meeting agenda**  
**Motion: Michael                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Larry                      Passed unanimously**

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6. **Child Support and Custody Ratios: Courtroom Bias?** – Mike offered an argument that amounts of child support ordered by the courts and the amounts collected by child enforcement have remained consistent over the years, between 60 and 65%, and may be reason enough to look at new ways of providing support for children such as shared custody and credit given for involvement with the child
7. **NH CAN (NH Child Advocacy Network) Advisor Status** – Larry shared copies of the application (corrected form attached). He made the point that NHCSM can be an advisor group but not a partner because NHCSM is a state agency. He noted that he had listed himself as the contact person. He asked if any other member besides Mike wanted to be on the NHCAN monthly contact list. Joe added a fax number to the application and Mike asked that family economic security be added to the application under, Areas of Interest. Larry stated he would make the additions and file the application with NHCAN. He offered a motion to approve the collaboration  
**Motion: Larry                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Scott Meyer                      Passed unanimously**
8. **NH HHS Commissioner Toumpas/ Neal Boutin Invitation Update** – Joe has tried to reach out on two different occasions to the department and has received no reply. He will try again. Michael made the point that the Commission should continue to reach out and to list Neal Boutin's name and the issue each month in the agenda. He stressed that Boutin as liaison to the Commission on matters such as fair treatment for men, finding ways to enhance the father-child connection and other areas should be a high-priority area for NH Health and Human Services as it is for the Commission
9. **NHCSM Internship** - Larry shared the NHCTF (New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund) internship job description and the internship agreement he uses for Keene State College students working at Head Start in Keene (both attached). Scott indicated that he is in touch with Delilah Smith at PSU (Plymouth State University) to recruit an intern for the Commission and reminded members of the working position description the Commission has under consideration. Both Scott and Larry indicated that they will continue to pursue this including Scott's contact with Executive Counselor Ray Burton
10. **Pro Bono Lawyers Update** – Tabled in David's absence
11. **Legislative Initiative** – Michael noted this area had been covered earlier. He stressed again the importance of offering proposals for legislation to individual and groups of legislators that supported men's health, fairness in legal proceedings for men, and involvement of men in the lives of their children and including their involvement in educational settings
12. **Web Site Update** – Larry reported the site to be updated and stated he would forward the latest approved minutes to Scott Garmin
13. **Public Input I** – Larry Colby used the time to appeal for public support of the NHCSM (NH Commission on the Status of Men) by means of donations to the Commission

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14. **Commission Seat Update – Commissioner Meyer reported on his conversation with Jennifer Kuzma in the Governor’s office. The Governor and Executive Council continue to work on approving the seating of the 7<sup>th</sup> NHCSM member. Mike reminded members that it had been six months since the 7th seat became open due to Scott Garman’s resignation (April, 2009)**
15. **White House Community Forum on Responsible Fatherhood and Education Success – Larry and Michael attended the forum and had differing opinions on it. The forum is the second in a series of meetings to be held throughout the country. Larry believed the Manchester meeting was a chance at the very least for those interested in father involvement in education and in the lives’ of their children to see how many others are interested in the same thing. Larry was impressed with Mac Smith’s point about we know what has failed, let’s concentrate on moving forward and with his legislative effort to get the NH legislature to consider workplace flexibility to help parents stay connected to their children’s schools. He was also pleased with Thomas Brennan, Superintendent of the Manchester school district, and his idea of ‘pay and play,’ that is that there are ways beyond the wallet for parents to support their children. Michael felt that without minutes or a report from the forum that it could turn out top be just another instance of talk, talk, talk. He would hope for a follow-up list of recommendations as a result of the series of forums and plans to contact the White House.**
16. **Fathering Outreach/Posters – Scott shared the latest graphic (attached). Larry questioned the wording, ‘NH Commission for men’ on the draft poster and suggested that it would have to emphasize either the Commission on the Status of Men or be geared toward the general support of males in NH. Michael congratulated Scott on his efforts – as did other members – and asked Scott to bring a second draft to the October meeting**
17. **Other Agenda Items Brought Forward at Start of Meeting – None**
18. **Announcements**
  - a. **Parent Advocacy Day-October 15 2009-Legislative Office Building, Concord – Larry shared the workshop sign-up sheet and asked member to participate if possible (attached)**
19. **Public Input II - None**

**Joe called the meeting at 3:30 and reminded members of the next meeting: Friday October 30 2009 1:00 – 3:30 PM at the Legislative Office Building Room 206 in Concord**